
Socialist Party National Convention Delegates Remain Silent in Face of Attack on Soviet Russia: Cahan Rages in Attack on Soviet Rule.

by H.M Wicks

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A compilation of the most loathsome back stairs gossip against Soviet Russia, emanating from the journalistic house of prostitution of the entire capitalist world, combined with the vapid ravings of his own distraught mind, constituted the keynote speech at the opening of the 11th National Convention of the Socialist Party in New York City, Saturday, May 10 [1923].

Abraham Cahan, notorious Bolshevik baiter and editor of the *Jewish (Socialist) Daily Forward*, delivered this opening address in place of Morris Hillquit, who is now in Europe.

Cahan, although not a delegate, was introduced by Algernon Lee as “that old, loved and trusted fighting Socialist comrade,” and immediately launched in a tirade that was so acrimonious, intemperate, and obviously false that the majority of the delegates were stunned.

Only the immediate satellites of Cahan — the scribblers of the *New York Call* and others who owe their existence as ornaments of the Socialist Party to the Hillquit machine — appeared pleased.

Otto Branstetter, the National Secretary of the Socialist Party, smirked in the most cringing and servile manner, while Lee, as chairman grimaced like a trained baboon at each barrage of billingsgate hurled at the leaders of the World Revolution.

Defames Lenin and Trotsky.

Prefacing his attack with the declaration that the Bolshevik revolution was at first an experiment and that he was anxious to see it carried out, even though it was under the leadership of Communists, Cahan

first asserted that most of the leaders of the Russian Revolution were sincere and then proceeded to contradict himself in the most flagrant manner.

Stooping to the gutter for epithets of degradation to hurl at Communism, Cahan declared that Trotsky is a “bombastic windbag” and that his present physical condition “is undoubtedly due to his earlier complete moral collapse.” Then, in order no one could mistake his cowardly attack upon Lenin, the mountebank Cahan screeched deliriously that the great leader of the Bolshevik revolution was a “muddlehead lunatic.”

In almost any gathering of workingmen on earth this vile assault would have been the signal for vigorous protests from at least a part of the audience, but in this Socialist Party convention the few workers sat aghast, scarcely believing that one professing to speak for the working class could sink so low, while the petty bourgeois elements remained motionless, refusing to respond to Cahan’s obvious pause for applause.

“Did you see in the papers about that \$13 million fund sent out by the Bolshevik government to corrupt the world?” asked Cahan. Then he recited the latest piece of capitalist propaganda going the rounds against Soviet Russia. Bukharin, who is said to have asked for a report on expenditures, was denounced as a “simple-minded fellow — a mere baby in intelligence.”

Karl Radek, according to Cahan, is an adventurer who has a shady past in various European parties and cannot be considered an honest man in any sense of the word.

Gregory Zinoviev, President of the Executive Committee of the Communist International, is the

“rotten egg” of the whole Communist movement. “He shot 300 in Petrograd” and “some say he has deposited enormous sums in a bank in Switzerland for future use.”

In dealing with the Communist movement in America he again repeated the infamous lie to the effect that the Friends of Soviet Russia, the only working class organization in the United States effectively fighting the famine in Russia, are a gang of thieves and that the treasurer has now “skeddaddled,” and that hundreds of thousands of dollars were stolen outright. Cahan shamelessly boasted that his activity was responsible for the failure of the tool drive of the Friends of Soviet Russia, an admission that, if true, brands him as more contemptible than any other capitalist hireling on earth. The creature not only deliberately conspired to enforce perpetual starvation upon the helpless children of the famine region in Russia, but has the audacity to boast of it before a conference professing to represent a part of the labor movement in this country.

Admits “SP” Failure.

As Cahan raved on, he began to perceive that his remarks were making but little impression, so he glared at the delegates, few in number and scattered about the hall, and shouted that the Socialist Party had failed.

“The fact that so few comrades are present is proof that we are a failure.” But, in spite of the present failure there is hope for Socialism in the United States today, “the same as there was in England 30 years ago.” Ignorant of the vast difference in the economic life of Britain of 30 years ago and the highly developed imperialism of the United States today, this charlatan endeavored to explain his weird notion of the creation of political parties. About the only intelligible thing he said was that “we have got to go about it in an Anglo-Saxon manner.” Like the balance of the ignoramuses at the head of the Socialist Party, this fakir imagines that capitalism here must be overcome in a different manner than elsewhere in the world.

Cahan then defended the British parliamentary leaders, J. Ramsay MacDonald & Co., for dining with the king of England and said that he would welcome the day when the same performance could be repeated

in this country. As there are no hereditary kings here in the British sense, Cahan would have to content himself with the spectacle of Victor Berger and Morris Hillquit pirouetting before Warren G. Harding and the First Lady of the Land.

After this digression his disordered mind soon wandered back to his pet aversion, Soviet Russia, and he concluded by asserting that a group in Russia had got hold of a good thing and did not want to give it up, as most of them were grafters.

“In dealing with the Communists we must always fight them. Never show them any favors, but knock them in the head.” This advice seems to have been followed by the yellow leaders of some of the needle trades unions, who employ sluggers and gangsters against the “Left” opposition in their own unions.

When he left the platform, six of the delegates applauded, the others looking at one another in bewilderment. Especially was the effect upon the out-of-town [non-NYC] delegates noticeable. They had never heard anything to equal Cahan’s assault upon Soviet Russia even from the most rabid capitalist propagandists.

This outburst, obviously official, coming from one of the foremost figures in the Socialist Party, brands them potential assassins of the working class of the United States. Just as Scheidemann and Ebert in Germany perpetrated outrages against the revolutionary workers that even the Kaiser and his minions shrank from contemplating, so the Hillquits, Bergers, Cahans, Oneals, Lees, and others of their ilk in this country crawl beneath the vilest of capitalist hirelings in their verbal assaults upon the vanguard of the working class. Potential assassins of the revolutionary workers, but not possessing the power to indulge their aspirations, these scoundrels at the head of the Socialist Party content themselves with repeating and amplifying the propaganda of the British government spy and newspaper correspondent, Frances McCullagh, and the American detective and union-smasher, William J. Burns.

Afraid of WP Communication.

Secretary Otto Branstetter announced that he had a communication from C.E. Ruthenberg, Secretary of the Workers Party, calling for a United Front of labor. Instead of reading it he waited for action from

the floor. Evidently the machinery was not in good working order, for after a painful pause, Branstetter announced that the document was rather lengthy. Finally Oneal came to the rescue with a motion to refer it to the Resolutions Committee. Then came a discussion on international relations. Under this head were two propositions submitted on the agenda. One was that the delegates to the International Congress at Hamburg be instructed to vote in favor of unity of Socialist and trade union forces of the world. The second that the delegates be instructed to support the reunion of Socialist forces in one International on the condition (1) that no party be admitted unless it specifically repudiates *Burgfrieden* or Social Peace; and (2) that no other condition be imposed.

William Karlin, a lawyer of New York, declared that the amendment to the second proposition to refuse to admit parties unless they repudiate Social Peace would exclude most of the leaders of the Internationals, and therefore it was not advisable to adopt it, thereby eliminating those "comrades."

Mayor Hoan Makes Blunder.

Mayor Daniel W. Hoan of Milwaukee, Victor Berger's man "Friday," asserted that both motions should be voted down, because Berger and Hillquit are now in Europe and can be trusted to act in the interest of the party at the Hamburg conference without instructions.

"We have decided to hold aloof from all Internationals until one has been created that we can honestly join." The eminent mayor, whose historical achievement was his leading of the jingo Preparedness Parade in Milwaukee in 1916, is so ignorant of the party to which he belongs that he did not know that the Socialist Party affiliated with the Vienna 2-1/2 International last year.

Oneal declared that "no Socialist could oppose either of the propositions." Since resolutions adopted by the Social Patriots, masquerading as Socialists, in Europe become meaningless "scraps of paper," the same as the treaties of their various capitalist governments in times of war, Oneal could safely advocate the adoption of both propositions on the agenda, thereby trying to save the face of the Socialist Party before the workers of the United States.

Then came Cameron King of California, with a peal to vote down both propositions. "Why should we, who have less than 12,000 members, presume to tell J. Ramsey MacDonald, and the leaders of the German party what attitude they should take toward their own government? We should not try to dictate to these great men. Why, this proposition would exclude Hjalmar Branting of Sweden, and in case Comrade MacDonald entered the British cabinet, he would be excluded. I tell you, comrades, it is unthinkable! We must go in with these men and help them rebuild the International, which was so badly shattered during the war."

Cameron King himself was a jingo during the late war, and an enemy of the "Huns." Now that the capitalist governments of Germany and the United States are at peace, King, like all other yellow socialists, can again establish diplomatic relations.

Pat Quinlan of Buffalo arose and declared that he was quite positive that some of our International Delegates would vote to affiliate with the identical people who murdered Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg.

William H. Henry, the Indian henchman of the Berger-Hillquit combination, informed Mayor Hoan that the Socialist Party was a member of the Vienna 2-1/2 International, which came as a distinct shock to the poobah of Milwaukee.

Finally Algernon Lee moved to refer the whole question to the Committee on Resolutions. It was apparent that the discussion was reaching the danger point. Lee assured the delegates that in his opinion unity between the 2nd International, with headquarters in London, and the Vienna Union was a foregone conclusion. This motion carried and disposed of this troublesome question for the time being.

When the Resolutions Committee reported on the question of International relations, it rejoiced, in a carefully worded statement, at the prospect of unity of the 2nd International and the Vienna 2-1/2 International. It declared that such unity should be based upon the principles of the class struggle, carefully avoiding reference to the question of *Burgfrieden*, or Social Peace, that arouse so much discussion on the first day. Thus with the adoption of a meaningless and ambiguous demand for recognition of the principle of "class struggle," the question of affiliation with Vandervelde,

War Minister to the King of Belgium, and with Scheidemann, Ebert, and other assassins of the working class, the way is paved for the Socialist Party to again enter the ranks of the International of the Great Betrayal.

Russian “Political Prisoners.”

William M. Fiengenbaum, one of the writers on the New York Call, introduced a resolution demanding “freedom of political prisoners in Soviet Russia.” Fiengenbaum declared that the Socialist of America must demand freedom of speech, press, and assembly in Soviet Russia and protest emphatically against the “merciless persecution of our comrades” of the Socialist Revolutionary Party. He buttressed his remarks with quotations from the lying statistics furnished by the Berlin propaganda bureau of the Allied White Guards, which is under the management of Victor Chernov, formerly a member of the Kerensky cabinet in Russia.

O’Toole of Maryland, in a plea against the adoption of the resolution, said that in case it was adopted the Workers Party would take away the rest of the membership of the Socialist Party in Baltimore, his home town. He referred to the fact that the convention had declared in a previous session that the enemies of Russia “were our enemies,” but that if that resolution were adopted, as a matter of decency and to keep the record clear, the convention would have to repudiate the earlier declaration. “Can we afford to place ourselves in the same class with the capitalist press in its attacks upon Russia?” asks O’Toole.

Finally James Oneal again came to the rescue with a motion that it be referred back to the Resolutions Committee for redrafting, so that the language of Feigenbaum could be moderated, while maintaining the counterrevolutionary sense of the thing.

Edited by Tim Davenport.

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